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ECHOES FROM HORACE
· · IN · ·
ENGLISH VERSE

E. DOUGLAS ARMOUR

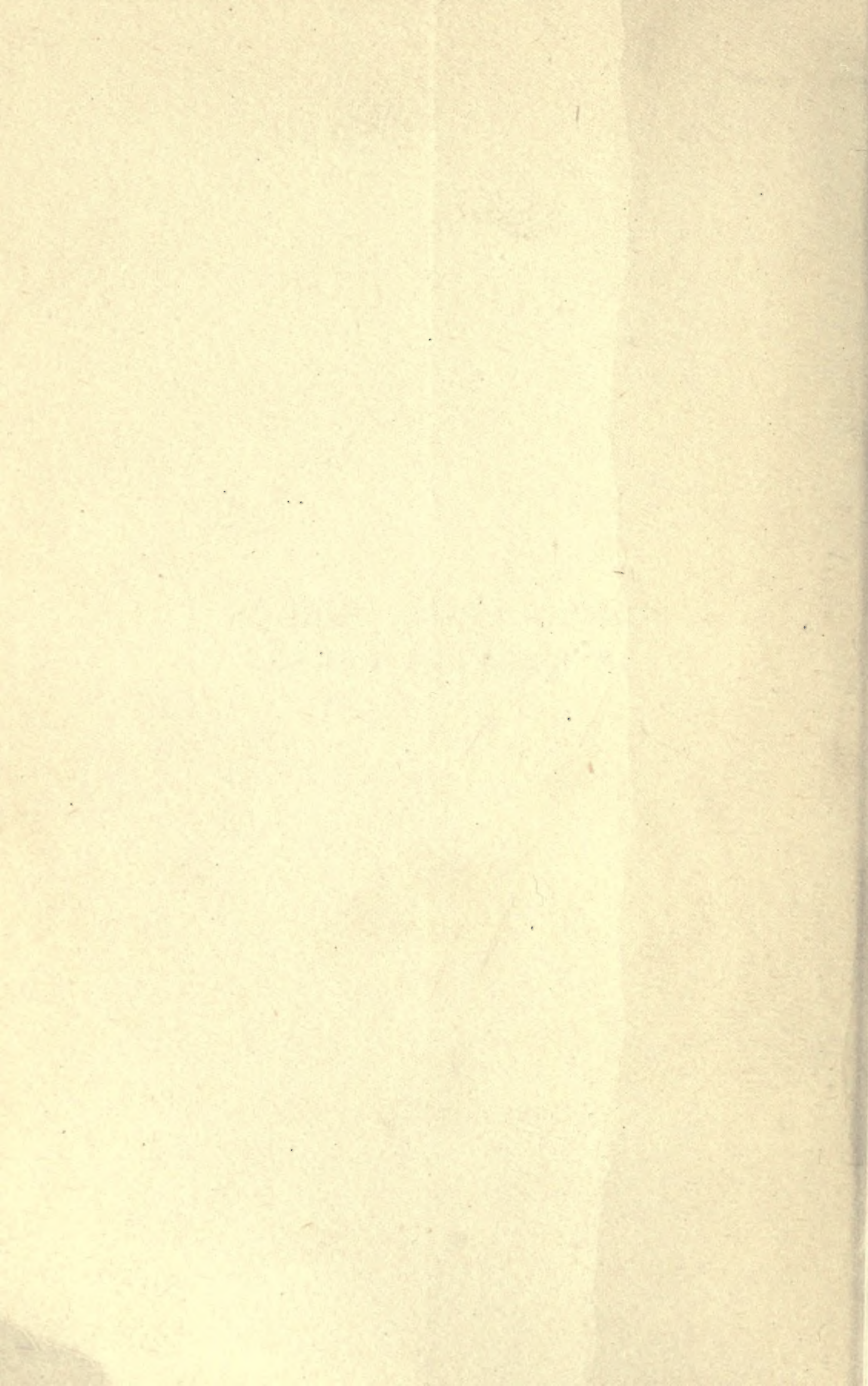
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ECHOES FROM HORACE
IN ENGLISH VERSE



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ECHOES FROM HORACE

IN

ENGLISH VERSE


By

EDWARD DOUGLAS ARMOUR, K.C.

Author of "Law Lyrics," Etc.

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TO
THE REV'D. F. GRAHAM ORCHARD, D.D.,
HEADMASTER OF
TRINITY COLLEGE SCHOOL,
AS A SLIGHT RECOGNITION OF WHAT I OWE
TO THE SCHOOL.

PREFACE.

THE following compositions are not, nor were they intended to be, translations—as the merest glance will show. While in most cases paraphrases of the odes treated have been attempted, in others the theme of the ode has been taken and dealt with according to the fancy or humour of the moment.

My grateful acknowledgments are due to the Rev. F. Graham Orchard, D.D., Head Master of Trinity College School, and W. D. Woodhead, Esq., Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Greek in the University of Toronto, who were good enough to read the manuscript, and who gave me much valuable advice.

Some of these compositions have appeared in *The Canadian Forum*, and I have to thank the proprietors for permission to include them in this volume.

Toronto.

E. D. A.

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TO THE BOOK.
BOOK I., EPISTLE XX.

Go FORTH my book, impatient of restraint,
With all your faults exposed to public view;
And vex me not again with your complaint
That you are shown to but a favoured few.
But bear in mind, while with impatience burning,
That once you go abroad there's no returning.

Perchance some book-worm, loth to bore himself
With contemplation of your jingling rhymes,
Will place you in retreat upon his shelf
Where grovelling worms will bore your leaves betimes.
Your author then may freely laugh his fill;
For who would save an ass against his will?

If vulgar thumb should soil your snowy page,
Or dog-ear decorate your polished leaf,
Know that you'll but have earned your lawful wage;
For oft ambition leads to naught but grief.
Learn then, too late, your rashness to repent;
Do not on me your maledictions vent.

When youth departs and, aged and forlorn,
You find in lowly book-stall a retreat,
Rueing the fateful day when you were born,
And foul with dust from off the busy street,
Don't blame me if you find your cheap contents
Exposed for sale at ten or fifteen cents.

And if it happen at the eventide
That low-toned voices reach your listening ear
As friends converse, tell them that perhaps I tried
My doubtful wings beyond my proper sphere;
And that I've passed the bleak and cold December
So often that I care not to remember.

THE VARIOUS PURSUITS OF MEN.

TO MAECENAS.

BOOK I, ODE I.

O ROYAL Maecenas of royal descent,
To you, my protector, these lines I present.

Some men will delight in a chariot race,
When the wheels are a-glow with the heat of the pace
As they skim past the goal and tear up the clods,
For the glorious palm that exalts to the gods.
Some think they've performed an astonishing feat
By achieving success with a corner in wheat;
While others regard as well-merited fate
An election to honours or office of state.
The farmer, who sweats in the sun as he wields
His hoe on the crops in his ancestral fields,
Could not be persuaded to trust to the sails
Of a Cyprian bark and encounter the gales.
The merchant from various voyages saves
What he thinks is enough, and abandons the waves;
But, loth to endure a penurious life,
Refits his old ship and re-enters the strife.
Another will snatch a great part of the day,
And stretch himself out in an indolent way
On the green of the turf at the head of a stream,
And drink himself into a muddled-up dream.
The bray of the bugle, the clarion's call,
The lure of the camp, and the turmoil and brawl
Of war so detested by mothers, excite
Full many to transports of joy and delight.

The hunter exults in the bracing cold air
When, with hounds, he is chasing the roe from her
lair,

Or the Marsian boar which their efforts arouse,
And leaves all unheeded his tender young spouse.

But as for me, you'll notice how
The ivy crowns my learned brow,
And clearly indicates that I
Am equal to the gods on high.
The nymphs and satyrs in the grove,
Who in their lightsome dances move,
Make me, as it must be allowed,
Distinguished from the vulgar crowd,
If but Euterpe's pipe inspire,
And Polyhymnia tune her lyre.
Now, if you think that you can do it,
And rank me as a lyric poet,
There's naught my reputation mars,
My swollen head shall bump the stars.

SPRING, AND A WARNING.

TO SESTIUS.

BOOK I, ODE IV.

At last the winter's snow has gone
Before the western breeze;
And dry-hulled ships are slowly drawn
By engines to the seas.

No longer do the oxen eat
At leisure in the byre;
And vacant is the ploughman's seat
Beside the cosy fire.

Now Venus leads the sportive round
Throughout the moonlit spaces,
And Earth returns the merry sound
Of dancing Nymphs and Graces.

The Cyclops' forges Vulcan lights,
And soon will rise the roar
Of ponderous hammer, as it smites
The red and glowing ore.

And youth and maidenhood may now
Enjoy the shining hours,
And wreath the smooth and glossy brow
With myrtle or with flowers.

To Faunus in the shady grove
We'll make our sacrifice
A lamb or kid, whichever prove
More pleasing in his eyes.

Pale death, with his impartial tread,
 Knocks at each fated door,
And summons with his message dread
 Great kings and lowly poor.

Oh Sestius, the Gods have hid
 The future from our eyes;
Short life forewarns us not to bid
 Long expectations rise.

And when to Pluto's shade, in fine,
 You ghostly shall retire,
There shall you not indulge in wine,
 Nor Lycidas admire.

TO PYRRHA.

BOOK I, ODE V.

(First Version.)

PYRRHA, who is the perfumed youth who poses
Beneath the pleasant grot, amid the roses,
And courts you now; for whom you dress, with care
And simple elegance, your golden hair?

How oft will he, so credulous, be slighted
By vows as lightly broke as lightly plighted?
How oft deplore it that the Gods have changed,
Withheld their favour, and become estranged?

Shall he who fondly trusts you now be shocked
By passion's storms, supplanting smiles that mocked?
As when the treacherous and uncertain breeze
Swells to a gale and frets the summer seas.

Oh wretched he, untried, who deems you fair!
The sacred wall of Neptune's fane shall bear
A tablet, which shall my escape relate,
And how my dripping garb I dedicate.

TO PYRRHA.

(Second Version.)

PYRRHA, who is the dainty youth,
With liquid perfumes reeking,
Who now caresses you, forsooth,
Your gracious favour seeking?

For whom do you demurely wait
Beneath the pleasant grot,
With golden hair drawn smooth and straight,
And coiled in simple knot?

How often will you break the troth
By you so lightly plighted?
How often vent your senseless wrath
So easily excited?

As he who trusts the placid sea
And gaily spreads his sails,
Encounters unexpectedly
Dark waves and furious gales,

So, Pyrrha, he who trusts you fair,
Inveigled by your glances,
Poor wretch! will find he has to bear
With shrewish whims and fancies.

A votive tablet shall relate
How I escaped the sea,
And dripping garments dedicate,
Oh Neptune, unto thee.

TO PYRRHA.

(Third Version.)

PYRRHA, I sniff the air, and shrewdly guess
That some well-perfumed scion of noblesse
Is dallying with you among the roses,
And winning your regard—as he supposes.

While he disports himself within the grotto,
I more than half suspect he's trying not to
Commit a breach of etiquette, and stare
At the perfection of your golden hair.

How he must marvel at the care and toil
Expended to produce that simple coil!
How wonder whether all that glorious sheen
Is due to nature, or to brilliantine!

Do you purpose to lead him such a dance
That even Deities will look askance;
To make him stand amazed that vows and oaths
You break as often as you change your clothes?

Oh Pyrrha, you remind me of the sea,
Deceitful in its calm placidity;
For he who trusts in you will never fail
To find himself the sport of storm and gale.

The toga which I wore when courting thee
I dedicate to Neptune of the sea;
And in his fane a tablet made of brass
Shall show how I escaped a fickle lass.

TO LYDIA.

BOOK I, ODE VIII.

LYDIA, by the powers above!
Beware of what you're doing;
You'll ruin Sybaris with love
And silly bill-and-coo-ing.

He will not wear his coat of mail,
Nor mount his Gallic steed;
Each day he grows more thin and pale,
A sickly, wasting weed.

He who did the javelin hurl,
The quoit unerring threw,
Has arms as white as any girl,
Instead of black and blue.

He fears the yellow Tiber's flood,
And shuns the oil and ring
More cautiously than viper's blood—
That foul and loathsome thing.

Instead of fighting now he skulks,
And hides behind your skirt,
Aping Achilles in the sulks.
Oh, Lydia, you flirt!

A WINTER NIGHT.

TO THALIARCHUS.

BOOK I, ODE IX.

Fast bound in winter's icy bands,
Soracte in his grandeur stands,
 Enshrouded deep in snow;
The labouring branches of the trees
Groan with its weight; the rivers freeze,
 Stagnate, and cease to flow.

Pile up the hearth and fan the fire,
Till flames leap higher still, and higher,
 And drive away the cold.
Now, Thaliarchus, bring the wine,
The richest juices of the vine,
 Mellow and ripe and old.

Seek not to know what hath the morrow
In store for mortals—whether sorrow,
 Meed of joy, or pain.
Enjoy the day with temperate zest,
And to the gods leave all the rest,
 And count each day a gain.

Treat not your pleasures with disdain
While youth and youthful joys remain,
 And love and dance delight;
While age and hoariness delay
And, lingering still, await the day
 To wreathe your head in white.

And now discourse of lovers' bliss,
The ravished token, stolen kiss,
 And maidens' coy advances ;
The prattle of the public way,
Soft whispers at the close of day ;
 And sing of love's romances.

TO MERCURY.

BOOK I, ODE X.

OH thou, who didst with perfect art
Refine the savage human heart
By skilful speech; from whom the race
Learned to comport itself with grace;

Herald of the Olympian Sire;
Designer of the curving lyre;
I sing thee, dexterous and deft
To hide the spoils of roguish theft.

When thou didst steal Apollo's kine
He threatened thee with wrath divine;
But laughed, and in the jesting joined,
To find his quiver was purloined.

When Priam, laden with his wealth,
Sallied from Troy, by craft and stealth
Thou didst evade the watch-light posts,
And lead him through the Grecian hosts.

With golden staff thou dost the blest
And pious souls conduct to rest;
Pleasing to all the Olympian train.
And those who throned in Hades reign.

THE PRESENT DAY.

TO LEUCONOE.

BOOK I, ODE XI.

Do not inquire, Leuconoë,
What Fate reserves for thee and me,
What terms of life, how long our ages.
And do not ask Chaldean sages,
Whether this winter be the last
In which thou'lt see the breakers cast
Upon Etruria's frowning rocks,
With sounding and recurrent shocks.
With patience use the time thou hast,
As if this year were e'en the last.
Be wise, let not thy hopes exceed
What brevity of life may need.
While we converse, the present day
Glides imperceptibly away ;
Seize it, nor let thy soul be vexed
With unknown happenings of the next.

TO THE SHIP OF STATE
OF ONTARIO.

BOOK I, ODE XIV.

OH ship, what will thy future be,
Launched on a new uncharted sea!
Thy sides are bare, the oars are gone;
The mast is sprung, the mainyards groan;
No tackle now supports thy keel,
No spirits answer thine appeal.
Why boast of timber and a frame
Descendants of illustrious fame,
If thou, in fickle humour, durst
Not let thy children quench their thirst!
The Southern breeze, with piteous whine,
Wafts faint perfume of native wine,
And mingles with the children's cry—
"Give us to drink, or else we die."
What sailor heeds the painted stern,
If he should know not where to turn
To wet his whistle, should he land
Upon Ontario's arid strand—
Dry as the Great Sahara's plain
That knows no dew or gentle rain;
Devoid of all those pleasant places
Refreshing as the green oases;
The only Caravansery

A Government Dispensary!
Oh thou, my trouble and fatigue,
Insidious foemen are in league,
With minds resolved and efforts bent,
To bind thee down to two per cent.

Land of lost spirits! hear my wail;
Let me, at least, have wine and ale!

THE RECANTATION.

BOOK I, ODE XVI.

OH daughter fairer than a mother fair,
My insolent iambs I forswear;
Consign them to the flames, or, if you choose,
Sink them in Adriatic's briny ooze.

Apollo may inspire his priests with fear;
The Corybantes' cymbals stun the ear;
And Cybele her devotees enthrall;
But anger's dire results exceed them all.

Neither the sword-blade forged from Noric ore,
The sea that strews its wrecks along the shore,
Nor dreadful fire, can equal anger's clash,
Nor Jove descending with appalling crash.

Prometheus, it is said, when moulding Man
Took from each animal, to round his plan,
Some ruling passion, and, amongst the rest,
Planted the rage of lions in his breast.

Thyestes to a dreadful end was driven
When anger was unbridled licence given.
Through anger many a lofty city falls,
And ploughshaves raze the site of ruined walls.

Compose your mind. I was of youthful age
When generous ardour swelled to burning rage,
And, in a frenzied and distracted mind,
Indited verses cruel and unkind.

I now recant, and fain would make amends ;
What hinders then that we should yet be friends ?
Condone my past unreasoning defection,
And once again regard me with affection.

THE INVITATION.

TO MAECENAS.

BOOK I, ODE XX.

MAECENAS, no doubt you remember the day
When you showed your magnificent self at the play,
And the people applauded, and shouted like blazes,
Till mountain and river-bank roared with your
praises.

On that wonderful day, Sir, I sealed up some wine ;
By this time it's ripe, and I hope rather fine.
And now, my Maecenas, I venture to ask
If you'll come to the farm when I open the cask.

I've nothing to equal your service of plate,
Or the wine that you drink when you're dining in
state.

My service is plain, I can't boast of the style of it,
But the wine has no headache within half a mile of it.

THE UPRIGHT MAN.

TO ARISTIUS FUSCUS.

BOOK I, ODE XXII.

THE man of upright life, and pure of heart,
Needs not the bow, the spear or poisoned dart;
And wheresoe'er his various ways may lead,
Whatever dangers lurk he will not heed.

While late I sang of Lalage, and pondered,
And far from my accustomed haunts I wandered,
A monster wolf, from out the Sabine wood,
Avoided me, although unarmed I stood.

Oh were I placed in arid, treeless plains,
Or where the clouds dissolve in frequent rains,
In barren wastes where beat the sun-god's rays,
Sweet Lalage I'd love through all my days.

THE TIMID CHLOE.

BOOK I, ODE XXIII.

CHLOE, wherefore do you try me?
Why do you forever fly me?
 You're like a fawn
 That wakes at dawn,
And finds her timorous mother gone,
 And darts away to find her.

She wanders through the trackless hills,
Leaps lightly over brooks and rills,
 In haste to find
 Her truant hind,
While gloomy thickets and the wind
 With terror almost blind her.

She trembles in her heart and knees
If leaves but rustle in the trees,
 Or lizards rush
 And stir the bush,
And lightly break the morning hush;
 And starts at sounds behind her.

No tiger fierce am I to rend you,
Chloë, I rather would defend you.
 Or soon or late
 The married state
Will overtake you—woman's fate,
 Which Nature has assigned her.

THE DEATH OF QUINTILIUS.

TO VIRGIL.

BOOK I, ODE XXIV.

THOU of the tuneful voice, Oh Muse,
Maker of sweet refrains,
While I lament do not refuse
To teach me mournful strains.

Quintilius sleeps. Where shall we find,
Among those who remain,
One with his faith, his modest mind,
His honour without stain?

My Virgil, though our noble friend
Is mourned by many true
And righteous men, none mourn his end
More bitterly than you.

What though you strike your tuneful lyre
More skilfully than he
Who could the stones with life inspire,
And charm the listening tree,

You cannot cause the blood to flow,
Nor yet awake with song
Those whom the Gods have sent below
To join the gloomy throng.

Though this is sad, yet may we find
Courage and faith to bend
Our heads and bear, with patient mind,
What no one can amend.

IN PRAISE OF LAMIA.

BOOK I, ODE XXVI.

THE Muses' friend—if grief beset,
I fling it to the wanton breeze
To waft it far away, and let
It die upon the Cretan seas.

What care I who the frozen North
May dread as its despotic King;
Or whether armies sally forth
To war about some senseless thing!

Sweet Muse, who ever dost rejoice
In the pure fountain's sparkling showers,
And music from its tinkling voice,
For Lamia weave the sunny flowers.

Raise him in honour to the skies,
Thou, and thy sisters' tuneful choir;
My Lamia now immortalize
With music from the Lesbian lyre.

THE WINE PARTY.

TO HIS COMPANIONS.

BOOK I, ODE XXVII.

WHEN you drink do not quarrel and ill-nature show
Like those roystering fellows of Thrace,
Who are apt at their feasts to get angry, and throw
A cupful of wine in your face.

Use wine in a way that is worthy of praise,
And never that blood may be spilt;
Protect modest Bacchus from vulgar affrays,
But enjoy yourselves up to the hilt.

A table provided with candles and wine
Is no place for a Median dagger;
Away with it! now on your elbows recline,
And cease all your boisterous swagger.

Megilla's young brother at once must declare
Who it is that he calls "Lady Mine,"
Before I'll consent to indulge in my share
Of the doughty Falernian wine.

'Tis the only condition on which I will drink;
So confess who it is that inflames you;
Don't blush because Venus has conquered, nor think
That a passion so generous shames you.

Your secret is safe in my keeping, my lad;
Just whisper the name in my ear—
Oh! I wish a less dismal affection you had,
And one that would bring you more cheer!

What witch with her potions, what wizard, can save,
Or even what gods from above,
Poor wretch! as you struggle with wind and with
wave
In a very Charybdis of love!

PHILOSOPHER AND SOLDIER.

TO ICCIUS.

BOOK I, ODE XXIX.

OH ICCIUS, do you covet from afar
Arabian treasures as the spoils of war;
Some maid, to be your slave when you have slain
Her lover; or some boy to swell your train,
Perfumed, and posing till your wine you've quaffed,
Who once discharged with skill the feathered shaft?

Now may the mountain torrent backward flow,
And Tiber's stream his course no longer know,
Since you, who promised nobler things before,
Would barter volumes of Socratic lore,
Works of Panætius too, once saved with care,
That you a coat of Spanish mail may wear.

TO HIS LYRE.

BOOK I, ODE XXXII.

(First Version).

MY LYRE, if we have ever made,
In sportive mood, in cooling shade,
A song that might forever stay,
Or live mayhap a single day ;
Assist me in a Latin song,
Oh Lyre, who erstwhile did belong
To Lesbos, and awoke the charms
Of music 'mid the clash of arms ;
Who sang of Venus and the boy,
Of Muses, Wine, and Love and Joy,
Of Lycus' locks of shining black,
And eyes that flashed their radiance back ;
Thou who Apollo dost adorn,
My solace when with toil I'm worn,
Pleasing to Jove at feasts divine—
When I invoke, to me incline.

TO HIS LYRE.

(Second Version).

AWAKE! my Lyre,
Poetic fire
Impels me now to sing,
As oft in shade
And forest glade
We made the woodland ring.

Of Lesbian birth,
You sang of mirth,
Of Muses, love and wine;
Now sing refrains
To Latin strains,
And blend your song with mine.

Your tuneful voice
Made gods rejoice
In Jove's great banquet hall.
My one relief
In toil or grief,
Attend me when I call.

LOVE'S ENTANGLEMENTS.

TO ALBIUS TIBULLUS.

BOOK I, ODE XXXIII.

MY ALBIUS, do not fume and fret,
And after Glycera hunger,
Because she left you in a pet
To flirt with some one younger.

Lycoris of the tiny forehead
Falls in love with Cyrus,
And, though he's cold and base and horrid,
Of him is most desirous.

Then Cyrus takes, Oh, cruel fate!
For Pholoë a whim,
But wolves and goats would sooner mate
Than Pholoë with him.

Thus, Venus will enjoy her joke,
And with the mortals sport,
By driving those beneath her yoke
Who never should consort.

Myself—I loved a fickle jade,
Uncertain as the sea,
Although an eligible maid
Was languishing for me.

A BOLT FROM THE BLUE.

BOOK I, ODE XXXIV.

I tried, for a season,
To deify Reason,
Regarding the Gods with contempt;
But now I'm induced,
By a sign they produced,
To abandon my impious attempt.

When Jupiter thunders,
Well, nobody wonders
If clouds are obscuring the skies;
For it's just a display
In the regular way
Of what he can do when he tries.

But, lately he threw
A bolt from the blue
That staggered the whole of creation;
And Atlas declared
He was awfully scared
When he felt the excessive vibration.

Confusion was spread
In the realms of the dead;
The rivers were running in spate;
And Charon's old boat
Could scarce keep afloat;
And the ferry was ten minutes late.

And so I can see it is
Due to the Deities
Not to disparage their power;
They can alter the state
Of the low to the great,
And the proud and the arrogant lower.

Though now I'm converted,
I'm still disconcerted
Lest I should be left in the lurch;
And I think I'll atone,
If they leave me alone,
And try to get back to the Church.

SIMPLICITY.

TO HIS CUP-BEARER.

BOOK I, ODE XXXVIII.

OH BOY, I Persian pomp detest,
And chaplets wove with linden rind;
And cease, oh cease your restless quest
A lingering rose for me to find.

I but desire the myrtle plain
To bind around your brow and mine;
Now bring me wine, and I shall drain
A cup beneath this mantling vine.

PROVERBIAL PHILOSOPHY.

TO CRISPUS SALLUSTIUS.

BOOK II, ODE II.

No man is great who grinds and saves,
And takes his only pleasure
In hiding, in the niggard earth,
His hordes of barren treasure.

Wealth gains its only splendour from
Benevolent employment,
And from a wise and prudent use
In moderate enjoyment.

A kindly love and well bestowed
Ensures a noble name,
And he who orders thus his life
Shall mount on wings of fame.

He who his passions can control,
His craving greed abate,
A greater kingdom shall possess
Than he who rules a State.

Virtue abhors the vulgar crowd
Flaunting their swollen gains,
And wreathes him with the laurel who
From avarice abstains.

SERENITY OF MIND.

TO DELLIUS.

BOOK II, ODE III.

OH Dellius, born to die, an even mind
Preserve; though care and poverty may grind,
Or fortune with her lavish gifts incite
To undue and immoderate delight;

Whether a life of sadness you bewail,
Or, passing happy days, you should regale
Yourself with wine, reclining at your ease
In grateful shadow of embowering trees.

Why else should pine and hoary poplar meet
In hospitable shade, a cool retreat,
And winding brooks make music as they pass
In rippling wavelets through the teeming grass?

Command your slaves to bring Falernian wine,
And fragrant roses in your locks entwine,
While age permits, and the three sisters dread
Forbear awhile to cut the fatal thread.

Stern Fate, in executing her decrees,
Will rend you from your house and groves of trees,
Your villa washed by yellow Tiber's flow,
And on your heir your riches will bestow.

Whether to dazzling fortune you are heir,
Or born to poverty and want and care,
What boots it, since you never can evade
The path that leads to Pluto's gloomy shade!

Unceasingly the universal urn
Revolves, and when at length the fatal turn
Our lot shall cast, to exile we must go,
And join the ghostly company below.

THE BASHFUL LOVER.

TO XANTHIAS PHOCEUS.

BOOK IV, ODE IV.

OH Xanthias Phoceus!
It's simply atrocious
To blush for your love like a boy,
When great men at arms
Fell a prey to its charms
At the siege of the City of Troy.

Achilles the haughty
Undoubtedly thought he
Possessed in Briseis a pearl;
For he got just as cross
As a bear at his loss,
When he had to surrender the girl.

The captive Tecmessa
Made Ajax confess a
Quite tender regard for the maid;
Though, for all that we know,
Or the histories show.
She may have been rather a jade.

Agamemnon was caught;
And he bitterly fought
Till he captured Briseis to flirt with,
Though his ill-gotten gain
May have given more pain
Than the wounds he was afterwards hurt with.

Now Xanthias, lad,
It would be too bad
If you cast off your Phyllis' affections;
Remember, her father
And mother are rather
Nice people to have for connections.

It's true, to be sure,
That her parents are poor;
But, though she her want may lament,
She possesses that which is
Much better than riches—
Refinement and royal descent.

I'm turning two score,
Being forty or more,
So, pray don't exhibit alarm,
If I cherish a chaste
Admiration or taste
For a nicely turned ankle or arm.

TO BARINE.

BOOK II, ODE VIII.

BARINE, if the gods had e'er ordained
One penalty for all your vows forsworn;
If but one pearly tooth of yours were stained,
One rosy nail discoloured, bruised or torn,
I might believe you. But the more you vow,
The more you break your solemn adjuration,
Still more, still brighter, does your beauty glow,
The theme of ardent youthful admiration.

Oaths by your mother's urn, the starry night,
The deathless Gods, or heaven, are lightly spoken;
To disregard them gives you no affright;
They bring your blessings only when they're
broken.

And Venus laughs, your falseness to condone,
And simple nymphs, so artless and sincere;
While Cupid, as he whets upon his stone
His fiery darts, bestows a mocking jeer.

New youths grow up the while to wear your gyves;
New slaves to blindly bow to your behests;
And every early lover vainly strives
To leave you, while he hopelessly protests.
Fond mothers for their sons are full of fears;
Dire apprehension thrifty age arouses;
And anxious wives, new wedded, are in tears
Lest you, an adverse gale, detain their spouses.

THE DEATH OF MYSTES.

TO VALGIUS.

BOOK II, ODE IX.

'Tis not forever that the showers of rain
Fall on the furrowed field and grassy plain.
'Tis not forever that the Caspian sea
Is harassed by the wind's wild revelry.

The rigid ice does not forever bind
Armenia's shore; nor does the ruthless wind
Shake the Garganian oaks; nor Time bereaves
The ash-tree always of her fallen leaves.

And yet for Mystes you forever mourn!
Not rising Vesper will suffice to turn
Your thoughts away from him, nor breaking day
When all night's constellations fade away.

He who of generations bore the years
Wept for Antilochus not many tears.
Nor yet for Troilus, soon gone to sleep,
Did parents and his sisters always weep.

With all these tender memories then have done,
And sing of victories by Caesar won;
Of vanquished races locked in their own domain,
Whose riders at their borders draw the rein.

THE GOLDEN MEAN.

TO LICINIUS MURENA.

BOOK II, ODE X.

LICINIUS, you should always keep
A middle course; nor cling to shore,
Nor tempt the vast and treacherous deep,
The threatening wave, the tempest's roar.

If you elect the golden mean
Of fortune, you shall neither dwell
In envied palace, nor be seen
The tenant of a squalid cell.

The highest tower, the tallest tree,
Will fall with most resounding crash;
The highest mountain ever be
The one to draw the lightning's flash.

Great Jove both sends the winter's cold
And in his season takes away;
And so to-morrow may not hold
The frowns and sorrows of to-day.

If straitened means should be your fate,
Be bold, let not your courage fail;
If prosperous winds your sails inflate,
Steer cautiously before the gale.

THE FALLEN TREE.

BOOK II, ODE XIII.

OH, sorry log! Oh, fallen tree!
Whoe'er it was that planted thee
Threatened the unborn generation,
And brought reproach on my plantation.

So vile a wretch would nothing reck
To break his aged father's neck;
Would treat as but a merry jest
The murder of his sleeping guest.

No doubt, in subtle poisons skilled,
Full many a victim he has killed;
Committed crimes of which Medea
Would shudder at the bare idea.

What fortune saved me, who can tell,
When on my head you nearly fell!
Not e'en the cautious man can say
What evil thing may hap to-day.

The sailor dreads the treacherous strait,
Nor elsewhere heeds his hidden fate.
The soldier dreads the Parthian bow;
The Parthian, his Italian foe.

In unexpected times and ways
Death, ruthless tyrant, ends our days;
'Tis not vouchsafed to us to know
Whence to anticipate the blow.

Great Jove! how nearly did I meet
Aeacus on his judgment seat,
And Proserpine, and all the blest,
And pious spirits gone to rest.

Her plaintive song there Sappho sings;
Alcaeus strikes harmonious strings,
And chants with thrilling melody
Sad tales of exile, war and sea.

Admiring shadows press and rush
To listen, and religious hush
Hangs over all, as swells the song
Of tyrants slain and righted wrong.

Cerberus, sentinel of Hell,
Crouches and fawns beneath the spell;
The Furies' tresses rest in peace,
And from their hideous writhing cease.

The dulcet melodies inspire
Prometheus too and Pelops' sire,
And soothe their pain; while lynx and lion
Escape the arrows of Orion.

THE CERTAINTY OF DEATH.

TO POSTUMUS.

BOOK II, ODE XIV.

OH Postumus, the days are flying fast;
Each year glides swiftly backward to the past.
No pious mind can stay the failing breath,
Advancing age, insuperable death;
Nor, though you sacrifice each passing day
A hecatomb to Pluto, can you stay
The time when you must cross the dismal stream
Where ghostly shadows pass as in a dream.

In vain shall you from dreadful war be free,
Escape the billows of a raging sea,
Or yet with care avoid the dread disease
Borne from the South on Autumn's baleful breeze;
To one inevitable end we all are driven,
Death claims his tribute and it must be given.
'Tis vain to fabricate excuse or plea;
Unchanging Fate decrees that we must see
Cocytus wandering through his noxious soil,
And Sisyphus condemned to endless toil.

Your lands and houses and your pleasing wife
Must be abandoned at the close of life;
Your orchards and the groves that you have made,
All but the hated cypress' gloomy shade.
Your wines, selected with exquisite taste,
More rare than ever priestly banquets graced,
Your heir will drink; and, if his moods incline,
Will stain the pavement with the wasted wine.

AGAINST LUXURY AND AVARICE.

BOOK II, ODE XVIII.

No arch that with its tawdry gilding gleams,
No pillars, ivory, nor Hymettian beams
Adorn my house. I do not pose as heir
To Eastern splendour; nor the purple wear.

Great wealth and consequence are not my aim;
I seek but honour, modest genius claim;
Ask but such courtesy as men may give,
Contented on my Sabine farm to live.

Day dawns on day, and fades away again;
The new moon grows, and hastens to her wane:
And yet you build, unmindful of your end,
Luxurious mansions, and your walls extend.

Foul avarice incites you to purloin
The poor man's land, which you unjustly join
Unto your own, and drive him from his home,
With children, wife and household gods to roam.

But, have a care, for judgment surely waits
In Pluto's Court, and not one jot abates.
Persist not, for the Earth her offering brings
To poor and needy as to sons of kings.

You cannot liberate with bribes of gold
Those whom the guardians of Hades hold.
And there, without entreaty or request,
They free the poor from toil and give them rest.

THE METAMORPHOSIS.

TO MAECENAS.

BOOK II, ODE XX.

MAECENAS, my friend,
I'm afraid there's an end
To my present career upon earth;
A curious feeling
Is over me stealing,
Indicative of a new birth.

From a very low root
I emerged, as a shoot
That threatened to puncture the sky,
And pointed the road
To my future abode—
For I feel that I'm going to fly.

Quite lately appeared
What I very much feared
Was an odious kind of disease;
My skin became rough,
And scaly and tough,
On my ankles and up to my knees.

I have feathers and down
From my knees to my crown;
And, although you may think it absurd,
As heaven is blue,
Maecenas, it's true,
That I'm slowly becoming a bird.

If you still hesitate
To accept what I state,
More proof I can easily bring;
For I'm writing this ode
At my present abode
With a quill that dropped out of my wing.

When the change is complete
From my head to my feet,
Some grand new adventures I'll dare;
Goodbye to the cities,
For all of my ditties
I'll sing up aloft in the air.

Poor Icarus failed;
For he foolishly sailed
On his wax-laden wings in the sun;
But with genuine wings,
Made of feathers and things,
I am sure that the thing can be done.

Then, up with a spring,
And I'm off on the wing,
To breathe in the upper ozone;
Over mountain and plain,
Over Colchis and Spain,
And the land on the banks of the Rhone.

Don't make any splurges
With mourning and dirges;
Moreover, don't take any pains
With a tomb or a grave,
For the trouble I'll save
By not leaving any remains.

CONTENTMENT.

BOOK III. ODE 1.

I HATE the vulgar crowd, I exorcise it ;
Democracy's the deuce, and I despise it.
Listen ! for I'm the man the Muse employs
To sing new verses to the girls and boys.

While petty kings were shepherding their flocks,
Jove quelled the giants with compelling knocks ;
The whole creation trembles at his nod,
And earthly rulers quail beneath his rod.

Observe this proud patrician as he stalks
With measured tread along the public walks ;
His greatest boast is that he's one of few
Whose blood is of the proper shade of blue.

Next, in this fawning hypocrite you see a
Creature who, if living in Judaea,
Would have been called a Pharisee, because
He says his character is free from flaws.

Another puffs his breast out like a pigeon,
Admits there may be something in religion,
But says distinction only can be won
By planting rows of trees—as he has done.

Then comes a man with little taste for planting,
And certainly with none for pious canting.
His claim for recognition is a bevy
Of clients who attend his morning levee.

The leveller, Death, the universal cure,
Visits the great as well as the obscure;
He'll call on all these gentlemen in turn,
As drop their names from the revolving urn.

What impious man enjoys Sicilian fare
Beneath a sword suspended by a hair!
Neither the lyre nor songs of birds will keep
His nerves in order so that he can sleep.

Sleep, gentle sleep, does not disdain the cottage
Where peasants eat their humble mess of pottage,
Nor Tempe's vale where gentle zephyrs play
On shady banks throughout the summer day.

He who has just enough, if such there be,
Heeds not the raging and tempestuous sea,
His vineyards torn and ravaged by the hail,
Nor yet his faithless farm when harvests fail.

Why should he care if drenching rain should beat
His poor plantations down, or if the heat
Should parch and shrivel everything that grows,
Or vines and olives die from frosts and snows?

The finny tribes observe the ocean shrink
When, pushing from the shore, the builders sink
Foundations deep, on which one day shall stand
Mansions for those disdainful of the land.

Yet Conscience, with her whispering fears and
threats,
Ascends with him she constantly besets;
Care haunts the galley on the heaving tides,
And sits behind the horseman as he rides.

Neither the Phrygian marble, nor the wine
Pressed from grapes of the Falernian vine,
Nor Persian perfume, sweeter than the rose,
Will serve a troubled conscience to compose.

Why, then, should I my means and substance waste
In rearing up a house in modern taste?
Or why exchange my peaceful Sabine vale
For wealth and all the cares it may entail?

DISCIPLINE.

BOOK III, ODE II.

LET every youth be fitly schooled in arms,
Ready for action when dread war's alarms
Arouse the nation. Let him learn to ride,
Privations bear, in open air abide,
Let him be practised with the lance and spear,
Enured to danger, knowing naught of fear;
Swift to deliver the decisive blow,
Ruthless to harass the retreating foe.

So, in the battle's sanguinary strife,
Some Tyrant's daughter and his royal wife
Shall, from the hostile walls, in terror view
Yon raging lion as he welters through
Lanes of his fallen foes, and deeply sigh
Lest their dear lord encounter him—and die.
Since there is no escape from death's decree,
And man and youth and coward vainly flee,
What can there be more glorious and sweet
Than in our country's service death to meet!

And Virtue with untarnished honour shines,
Doth not assume nor lay aside her signs
Of dignity to win the mob's applause,
Veering and changing from whatever cause.
To those not meriting death she opens wide
The gates of heaven, and, in ways denied
To others, soars on high and wings her way
Spurning the grovelling crowd, earth's mire and
clay.

And Silence too a sure reward requites.
That man who would divulge the sacred rites
Of Ceres never shall abide with me,
Nor would I venture with him on the sea.
For Jupiter offended lays his ban
Oft on the righteous with the wicked man.
Though Justice, lame of foot, lag for a time,
But seldom does she fail to punish crime.

WHY WEEP, ASTERIE?

BOOK III, ODE VII.

(First Version).

WHY weep, Asterie, for your promised spouse
To you so constant! whom returning spring
Will yet, with every favouring wind that blows,
Enriched with precious cargoes homeward bring.

Far from his course by gale and tempest borne,
And buffeted by storm and surging billow,
All the chill night his lot is but to mourn,
Sleepless and weary, on a lonely pillow.

In vain the temptress mouths her crafty lies
To win him from inviolate constancy,
Staunch as Icarian islet that defies
The angry breakers of a stormy sea.

As for yourself, Asterie, beware
Yon gallant famed for his equestrian skill;
Heed not the crooning flute's seductive air,
And if he deem you cold, be colder still.

WHY WEEP, ASTERIE?

(Second Version).

Why, Asterie, do you blubber
For that young sea-faring lubber
Of the name of Gyges?
Probably he had to shift
His course, and let his schooner drift
The way the wind obliges;
Shouting heave, ho! and avast!
To the men before the mast;
Then, with all his might,
Sails a-reefing, ropes a-hauling;
And with nothing but tarpauling
Over him at night.

When the gentle breezes bring
Gyges home again in Spring
With his little pile,
You should be prepared to meet him
Sweetly, and to fondly greet him
With a welcome smile.
Dry your eyes, and—blow your nose;
A little powder then dispose
Where it may be needed.
Though you hear a tale or two,
Gossip isn't always true;
Therefore do not heed it.

Every sailor, when away,
Has a sweetheart, so they say,
 In every foreign port.
Though he might get on a burst,
Gyges, even at his worst,
 Isn't of that sort.
Pretty little Grecian girls,
Glancing at him through their curls,
 Ogle with their eyes.
But when Gyges won't respond
Little Grecian girls despond—
 Not without surprise.

Now, Asterie, I'm alarmed.
I'm afraid you're being charmed
 By a gay young buck,
Riding on his prancing horses,
Winning races on the courses,
 Swimming like a duck.
When you hear the doleful squeaking
Of his fife, be sure it's speaking
 Treason of your lover.
Shut the door, and mind you lock it;
Drop the door-key in your pocket,
 And keep under cover.

THE ANTIPHONAL SONG.

HORACE AND LYDIA.

BOOK III, ODE IX.

WHEN I once pleased, and you were not caressed
By any other youth whose arms he'd fling
Around your snowy neck, I was more blessed,
And happier far, than ever Persian King.

When you for Chloë had no ardent flame,
Nor ranked her first, but loved me then the most,
I, Lydia, then enjoyed a greater fame
Than Ilia of Rome could ever boast.

Fair Chloë, skilful mistress of the lyre,
Whose voice accords so sweetly with its tone,
Enchants me now; and gladly I'd expire
If my surviving soul could join her own.

Young Calais of Thuria, gentle swain,
Is he whose rapturous love I now enjoy;
Death, double death, to me would be no pain,
If but the Fates would spare my loving boy.

What if our former love revive again
To bind us in indissoluble bond,
Chloë the golden-haired forsaken—then
Would Lydia, slighted once, again be fond?

Although his beauty make the star-light pale,
Though none with you for levity might vie,
Your passion rage like Adriatic gale,
With you I'd gladly live or gladly die.

THE ANTIPHONAL SONG.

(Second Version).

WHEN no other boy
Could indulge in the joy
Of flinging his arms round your neck,
By Jove! and by Bacchus!
Horatius Flaccus
Had little or nothing to reckon.
Oh, beautiful Lydia!
Whatever you did you
Must know that your wishes were law to me;
I was happier ma'am
Than a jovial clam,
And you couldn't compare the old Shah to me.

Oh, Horace, my lad,
Before ever you had
That silly flirtation with Chloë—
A pert little miss,
Although I'll say this,
That she is a bit dressy and showy—
I, Lydia, by name,
Was a lady of fame,
Distinguished abroad and at home;
And I'd not have changed places
With one of the Graces,
Or even with Ilia of Rome.

Fair Chloë of Thrace,
With her beautiful face,
Now consumes me with amorous fire;
I daresay you've heard
She can sing like a bird,
And play like the deuce on the lyre.
I'd go without dread
To the realms of the dead,
And lie there forever at rest,
If I could contrive
That she should survive,
And live with my soul in her breast.

Young Calais now
Is the swain I avow;
A lover he is every bit of him;
He gives me such treats
Of flowers and sweets
That I hope I shall never be quit of him.
You boast that you'd die
For Chloë, while I
Would consider her cheap at the price;
If the Gods would but spare
My lover, I swear
That I wouldn't mind doing it twice.

Don't let us be stupid;
Suppose now that Cupid
Should harness us under his yoke,
We could seal with a kiss
Our connubial bliss,
And treat all the past as a joke.

I could easily shake
Off Miss Chloë, and take
My Lydia again to my arms;
Though once you were slighted,
I'd just be delighted
To revel again in your charms.

Were Calais fair
As a star, I declare
That, although you were lighter than cork,
Oh, Horace, my boy,
I would wed you with joy,
And not care a hang for the stork.
Though your passion might be
As the turbulent sea—
The one that we call Adriatic—
If you were near by
I could live, I could die,
If it had to be done in an attic.

THE SERENADE.

TO LYCE.

BOOK III, ODE X.

LYCE, if it were your fate
To live in some barbarian State
Beside an icy river,
I'm sure you never could be more
Cruel than to shut the door,
And let me stand and shiver.

Hearken, how the wind is shrieking!
How the gates and doors are creaking,
Creaking on their hinges!
Don't you hear the swaying trees
Groaning in the bitter breeze
That's giving me such twinges?

Everywhere, for miles around,
Snow is lying on the ground;
Every copse and brake,
Every vineyard, every field
Is glistening with snow congealed,
Just like a wedding cake.

Cease from giving Venus pain;
Lay aside your proud disdain
Now and evermore;
Lest one day you lose your grip,
And let the running pulley slip,
And land upon the floor.

You were never meant to be
As distant as Penelope
Was to every wooer.
Ask your father any day,
And I'll venture that he'll say,
"Nothing could be truer."

Prayers and presents do not serve
In the least to make you swerve;
But have some compassion.
A serpent's feelings you must own,
A heart that hard as oak has grown,
To treat me in this fashion.

If you cannot pity me,
On my nose may pity be,
And that must suffice;
Or the sleet and snow alternate
In a little while will turn it
Into solid ice.

NEOBULE AND HEBRUS.

BOOK III, ODE XII.

(First Version).

Unhappy maidens we, who must repine
While from delights of love ourselves withholding,
Permitted not to soothe our cares with wine,
And frightened by an angry uncle's scolding!

When Cupid, Neobule, pierced your heart,
He robbed you of your webs and weaving-beam,
And Hebrus won you from Minerva's art
Fresh in his beauty from the Tiber's stream.

Bellerophon himself could not compete
With Hebrus when astride his spirited horse;
Nor was he ever known to meet defeat
In contests in the ring or on the course.

There's none so dexterous to wield the spear,
When harried herds are wildly flying o'er
The plain, so skilled to strike the running deer,
Or from his lair to rout the lurking boar.

NEOBULE AND HEBRUS.

(Second Version).

Poor little Neobule
Thought she might become unruly
If she ventured to imbibe a little wine;
So she used to say, "I think it
Quite unmaidenly to drink it,
And, if you please, I think I must decline."

And her uncle often told her
That he'd most severely scold her
If she dared to fall in love. So, in a word,
Unhappy Neobule
Was feeling quite unduly
Embarrassed, and emphatically bored.

Then Hebrus crossed her path,
Fresh and shining from his bath,
Which he took by swimming up and down the Tiber;
And her maidenly confusion
Brought the blushes in profusion—
Like a blush-rose, as I think I may describe her.

Then many a weary day
Did Neobule stay
Repining in her bower without ending;
And somewhat in this wise
Did the maid soliloquize,
While neglecting all her sewing and her mending.

Why, Cupid, did you rob
Neobule of a job
At her sewing and her knitting and her weaving!
Let my clothing go to tatters,
For nothing really matters
If I have to live a life of hopeless grieving.

Oh, Hebrus, you're a dear!
You haven't got a peer
In boxing or in running 'mongst them all;
It's a joy to see you ride
Any horse that you bestride,
When Bellerophon himself might get a fall.

If it falls to you to fight
Some poor unlucky wight,
His only thought is how to make escape;
And when you run a race
You always get a place
In the front, and you are first to breast the tape.

You strike the running deer
With the javelin or spear,
And never fail to bring your quarry down;
And as for sticking boars,
I know that there are scores
Of gentlemen who envy your renown.

Oh, if I only had
My dear departed Dad,
And not an uncle scolding all my life,
I'd try negotiation
To obtain a situation
With handsome Hebrus as his little wife.

TO THE SPRING OF BANDUSIA.

BOOK III, ODE XIII.

(First Version).

OH, crystal spring in shady bowers,
 Libations of the purest wine,
From goblets wreathed with dewy flowers,
 To-morrow shall be thine.

A tender kid, new-horned for strife
 Or amorous battle all in vain,
Shall render unto thee his life,
 His blood thy waters stain.

Secluded from the dog-star's ray,
 Thy cooling streams refresh the ox,
Work-weary, and at close of day
 Revive the wandering flocks.

Oh, never shall thy glory fade,
 Or fame depart, while I can sing
Thy sounding rocks, thy oaken shade,
 Bandusia, beauteous spring.

TO THE SPRING OF BANDUSIA.

(Second Version).

OH, Spring of Bandusia, crystal spring!
It was all very well for Horace to sing
Of your beauty; but what an extravagant thing
 To empty good wine in the stream!
How ruthless to rifle the beds and the bowers
In order to give you a handful of flowers,
So much better left to the dews and the showers!
 At any rate so it would seem.

And then just imagine how Horace would gloat
When he captured a poor little kid of a goat,
And sat on the bank with a knife at his throat!
 It really makes a man shiver.
And I think you'll agree that it's perfectly clear
That the wandering flock and the weary old steer,
When they came for a drink, would consider it queer
 To find all the blood in the river.

Though the poet might sing of your beauty divine,
I know that he always preferred to take wine
As he sat in the shade of his olive or vine,
 Or, mayhap, *sub tegmine fagi*.
And it makes our hearts heavy and ready to sink,
When we sit with our Horace and moodily think
That we, in Ontario, have nothing to drink,
 But two per cent. Radnor and Magi.

THE ANCIENT FLIRT.

TO CHLORIS.

BOOK III, ODE XV.

POOR Ibycus' wife!
At your time of life
Don't you think that you ought to retire,
You're really silly
To frisk like a filly,
Expecting us all to admire.

You're off on your whirls
With the boys and the girls,
With their wine and their lutes and guitars,
Like a cloud that is flying
In heaven, and trying
In vain to extinguish the stars.

If you are in town,
And you see a sweet gown
More proper for Chloë or Phyllis,
You rush off and buy it,
In spite of a riot
When Ibycus sees what the bill is.

Your giddy young daughter
May do as you taught her,
And frisk like a little she-kid;
But you are too old,
If the truth must be told,
To flirt as you formerly did.

It's much more befitting
For you to be knitting,
With pussy asleep on your knees,
Than practising poses,
To music and roses,
And drinking the wine to the lees.

HYMN TO FAUNUS.

OH Faunus, thou who dost adore
The flying nymphs, be pleased to bless
My garners with abundant store,
My flocks and herds with fruitfulness.

Then, when the year wears to an end,
A tender kid I'll offer up;
And smoking incense shall ascend,
And wine o'erflow the votive cup.

In honour of thy sacred feast
The villagers from toil abstain,
Unyoke the patient, weary beast,
And sport upon the grassy plain.

The ravening wolf no longer frights
The flock; the trees their offering make;
The peasant freed from toil delights
With triple dance the ground to shake.

HYMN TO FAUNUS.

(Second Version).

OH Faunus, you rascal, you know that you never
Can catch nimble nymphs who avoid you and fear
you;

You know that these ladies are rather too clever
To let themselves ever get anywhere near you.

So, prithee, desist and attend to my farm,
And see that no murrain or mildew shall come
nigh

My yearlings and plants; and preserve from all harm
Whatever is known as my *parvi alumni*.

At the end of the year, when we come to the Nones
Of December, I'll offer a kid in return,
Head, heart, hoof and hide, not to mention the bones,
With libations of wine, and some incense to burn.

The villagers joyfully honour your feast,
And sport in the fields with the calves and their
dams;

No silly formalities matter the least,
And wolves come out freely and frisk with the
lambs.

The trees in your honour their foliage shed;
The labourer gratefully ceases to dig,
With joy in his countenance holds up his head,
And hammers the ground with a heel-and-toe jig.

TO A JAR OF WINE.

BOOK III, ODE XXI.

OH, goodly cask!
Of you I ask
What secrets you contain;
Still staunch and tight,
Though brought to light
With me in Manlius' reign.

Will you give birth
To gloom or mirth,
Or broils and amorous madness,
Or brooding deep,
Or soothing sleep,
Or soul-bestirring gladness?

Oh, now reveal
What you conceal!
To-day indeed we'll live;
The mellowest wine
From choicest vine
Corvinus bids me give.

Socratic lore
May please him more,
But you he'll not decline.
Cato the wise
Did not despise
To warm his wit with wine.

The rude, uncouth
And rugged youth
By you is gentler made.
You cares reveal
And secrets steal,
With merry Bacchus' aid.

Spirit and hope
And will to cope
With kings and soldiers rough,
Your treasured hoard
Will well afford—
And strength to bear rebuff.

Do thou prolong
The mirth and song
Throughout the balmy night;
Till Phoebus rise,
And from the skies
Shall put the stars to flight.

TO DIANA.

BOOK III, ODE XXII.

DIANA, three-formed, Goddess of the hills,
You care for those who in their throes are taken,
And, thrice-invoked, alleviate their ills,
And help them, so to speak, to save their bacon.

This pine that shades my lowly tenement
Shall henceforth sacred be to you alone;
Each year a lusty boar-pig I'll present,
And you can save some bacon of your own.

TO PHIDYLE.

BOOK III, ODE XXIII.

IF, Phidyle, you raise your hands to heaven
When the new moon is hanging in the West,
If fruits and flesh and frankincense are given
To appease the household gods and give them rest,
The dread Sirocco's pestilential breath
Shall not infect your corn or fruitful vine;
Nor shall the Autumn bring disease or death
To tender flocks or to your peaceful kine.

Although a priestly sacrifice demands
Victims from snow-clad Algidus who feed
Amongst the oaks, the Gods will, from your hands,
Take rosemary and mrytle as their meed.
For, if the hand that makes the sacrifice
Be pure, whatever offering it may make,
However splendid, will not more suffice
To please than crackling salt or votive cake.

LOVE AND REVENGE.

TO VENUS.

BOOK III, ODE XXVI.

BUT lately in the lists of love,
Not without honour, oft I strove.
To Venus, now my loves expire,
I dedicate my torch and lyre.

Oh, Cyprian goddess! in return
Grant me one boon for which I yearn—
Give haughty Chloë, little rip!
One smart reminder with your whip.

HORACE'S MONUMENT.

TO MELPOMENE.

BOOK III, ODE XXX.

THOUGH other mundane things may pass,
More lasting than perennial brass

 A monument I've raised
Of Odes, Epodes, Epistles, and
Satires, that shall ever stand,
 And ever shall be praised.

A regal pyramid it's like!
Though wasting rain and wind may strike
 They never can demolish it.
The seasons change, the years proceed,
They cannot injure it, indeed
 They only serve to polish it.

And I—I shall not wholly die.
From darkness and oblivion my
 Immortal works shall raise me;
While priest and vestal virgin bend
Their steps the Capitol to ascend,
 Posterity shall praise me.

Where rages Aufidus, and where
Daunus, in region dry and bare,
 Ruled over rustic hordes,
Shall I, raised from a mere bucolic,
Be praised that I applied Aeolic
 Verse to Latin chords?

Oh, glorious Melpomene!
Regard me bending on my knee;
 Assume your well-won pride.
And, while I'm kneeling, crown my hair
With Delphic laurel, so that there
 It ever may abide.

TO TORQUATUS.

BOOK IV, ODE VII.

THE snows are gone; and now the fields
Are clothed in green, as Winter yields
His sceptre to the Spring;
The dwindling streams more gently flow,
The trees their tender leaf-buds show,
And birds in rapture sing.

In Nature's garb, and fancy free,
The merry Nymphs and Graces three
Join in the mazy dance;
And blithely o'er the sward they go,
Tripping their measures to and fro,
Beneath the moonbeam's glance.

The Seasons march. The Winter's snow
Dissolves when vernal zephyrs blow,
And Earth awakes to gladness;
Summer fulfils the hopes of spring,
Then Autumn doth her harvest bring,
And Winter—gloom and sadness.

From time to time mundane affairs
Change, as the changing moon repairs
Her waning in the sky;
But when the last dread debt is paid,
Forever are we dust and shade,
Torquatus, when we die.

Who knoweth whether Heaven will give
Another day in which to live,
 Fraught with its joy or care?
Whatever, of your goods or lands,
You spend escapes the greedy hands
 Of an expectant heir.

And when at last the silent tomb
Receives you, and your final doom
 Dread Minos shall decree,
Not suasive tongue, nor moral worth,
Not lineage, nor noble birth
 Will serve to set you free.

THE VAIN MAN.

TO LIGURINUS.

BOOK IV, ODE X.

LIGURINUS, Nature blesses
You with beauty, and your tresses
Loosely flow on either shoulder.
But, consider, when you're older,
And the wrinkles then replace
Rosy colours in your face;
When your hair begins to fall,
And cannot be replaced at all;
Then, when looking in your glass,
You'll exclaim, "Alas! Alas!
What a hideous reflection
Of what once was a complexion!
What a sterile waste I show
Where the hair was wont to grow!"
Then you'll wish that youth were fraught
With the wisdom Time has brought;
Or that Time, when making wise,
Had kept you fair to please your eyes.

MAECENAS' BIRTHDAY.

BOOK IV, ODE XI.

(First Version).

OH, Phyllis mine,
Albanian wine
That's nine years old at least
Is waiting in
Its ancient bin
To grace to-morrow's feast.

And parsley grows
In rows and rows
All in my garden fair,
And ivy too,
To make for you
A wreath to bind your hair.

The house is bright
With ruddy light,
The polished plate is shining;
And vervain chaste,
All interlaced,
The altar is entwining.

With cheerful noise
The maids and boys
Are bustling to and fro,
As they prepare
To-morrow's fare;
And fires are all aglow.

In simple state
I celebrate
The birthday of Maecenas ;
That day divides
At April's Ides
The month of sea-born Venus.

Do not deplore
That never more
Shall Telephus be fond ;
Another chains him
And retains him
In her pleasing bond.

Nor yet aspire
With rash desire
To leave your own condition ;
Early or late
A cruel fate
Awaits a false ambition.

Last of my flames !
No other claims
To be by me adored ;
Come then and grace
A welcome place
To-morrow at my board.

And gloom and care
Shall disappear
Before an ode I'm writing,
Which you shall learn
And praises earn,
My Phyllis, by reciting.

MAECENAS' BIRTHDAY.

(Second Version).

WHEN you wake to-morrow morning, late or early,
Phyllis dear,
Remember it's the most eventful day in all the year;
And dress in all your bravery, and all your best
array;
For to-morrow's Maecenas' birthday, Maecenas'
natal day.

I have a cask that's brimming with the best Albanian
wine,
Stored up for six or seven years, or perhaps as long
as nine;
We'll broach the cask and drink the wine, and none
shall say us nay;
For to-morrow's Maecenas' birthday, Maecenas'
natal day.

I've parsley in the garden, and a chaplet you shall
wear,
With ivy intertwined in it, to crown your golden
hair;
And Phyllis you shall make yourself look merry,
bright and gay;
For to-morrow's Maecenas' birthday, Maecenas'
natal day.

The fire is blazing on the hearth, the altar decked
with green,
The polished plate is glimmering with soft and sil-
very sheen;
And maids and boys are busy making everything
look gay;
For to-morrow's Maecenas' birthday, Maecenas'
natal day.

Another holds young Telephus bound in her golden
chain;
He's much above your rank, you know, so Phyllis
don't complain;
But come and share my feast, and stay as long as
you can stay;
For to-morrow's Maecenas' birthday, Maecenas'
natal day.

Come, then, my last and only love, and grace my
mean abode;
To help to drive dull care away I'll write for you
an ode,
And ask you to recite it for Maecenas, if I may;
For to-morrow's Maecenas' birthday, Maecenas'
natal day.

CONCERNING GARLIC.

EPODE III.

FOR any impious parricide
Who'd cut his father's throat,
If I a poison could select
For garlic I should vote.

Oh hardy peasants, tell me how
Your organs of digestion
Endure the stuff, when mine revolt
At even the suggestion.

That odorous salad that I ate
Prompts intermittent guessing,
Whether Canidia's poisons, or
The cook's, were in the dressing.

Medea, with a ready wit,
Made Jason thoroughly soak
Himself in garlic, ere he went
The fiery bulls to yoke.

And, making gifts with garlic smeared,
She rose to the occasion,
By mounting on her dragon's back
And making swift evasion.

Thirsty Apulia's burning heat,
And Hercules' cruel fate,
Were nothing to my torments
From the garlic that I ate.

Oh, droll Maecenas, if you should
Again be so misled,
May your own wife refuse your kiss
And lie remote in bed.

AGAINST CASSIUS.

EPODE VI.

You sneaking coward, yellow cur,
To persecute a stranger!
You! who if a wolf appeared
Would slink away from danger!

Why don't you show a bit of pluck
By facing one who'd fight you?
If you would only snarl at me
I promise you I'd bite you.

As greyhound or a mastiff fierce
Attacks the shepherd's foes,
With pricked up ears I'd hunt you down
Before me in the snows.

With loud terrific barks and howls
You make the woods resound,
But stop to sniff and gnaw the bone
That's thrown to you, you hound!

Beware of me! a knave like you
Is like to drive me wild;
Don't think because you show your teeth
I'll whimper like a child.

THE HORSE'S NECK.

WHEN Horace composed his *De Arte Poetica*,
He made to his readers at large so pathetic a
Plea, that they felt that they always should do as he
Warned them when tempted to dabble in poesy.

He advised them that they should avoid all distortions
And always observe the most proper proportions;
And said that a painter could do nothing worse
Than to join a man's head to the neck of a horse.

Though poets are said to be seers and sages,
They can't foresee everything all through the ages;
And what, as depicted in Horace's text,
Is absurd in one age is all right in the next.

So now in the very best golfing society
It's never considered a breach of propriety
When hot, tired golfers, regardless of sex,
Join their burning hot heads to nice cool horses'
necks.

THE PEDIGREE OF MAECENAS.

I HATE the vulgar crowd and drive it off;
At Persian pomp and luxury I scoff.
I take the middle course, the while I sing
The ancient lineage of a simple king.
And now, resourceful lyre, attune your lays,
And sing the glory of his ancient days.

Mæcenas, royal son of Tuscan Kings,
Patron of letters, art, and wine and things;
Illustrious in war and politics,
Or anything on which your mind you fix;
My darling honour, my perpetual pride,
In whom the virtues all at once reside;
Pillar of my affairs, a noble knight,
Who in two languages can read and write;
My sole protector, and my staunchest friend,
Who of your grace did often condescend
To visit at my farm, and drink the wine
Pressed from the ignoble Sabine vine;
To you these sounding verses I present,
Illustrative of your august descent.

Not half your race's glory has been shown,
Not half your glorious pedigree is known.
Before the seven-hilled city, Rome, was founded,
Before the trumpet's blast at Troy was sounded,
An emerald isle in Northern seas was set,
The which, for aught I know, may be there yet;
A land of teeming clouds and mist and fog,

A land of plain and mountain, turf and bog;
Of meadows lush and sweet, and ever green,
And last of all, but not the least—potheen.
A land where every family's a royal one,
And not a single one of them a loyal one;
For, where the common people all are kings,
What need of loyalty, and such like things!

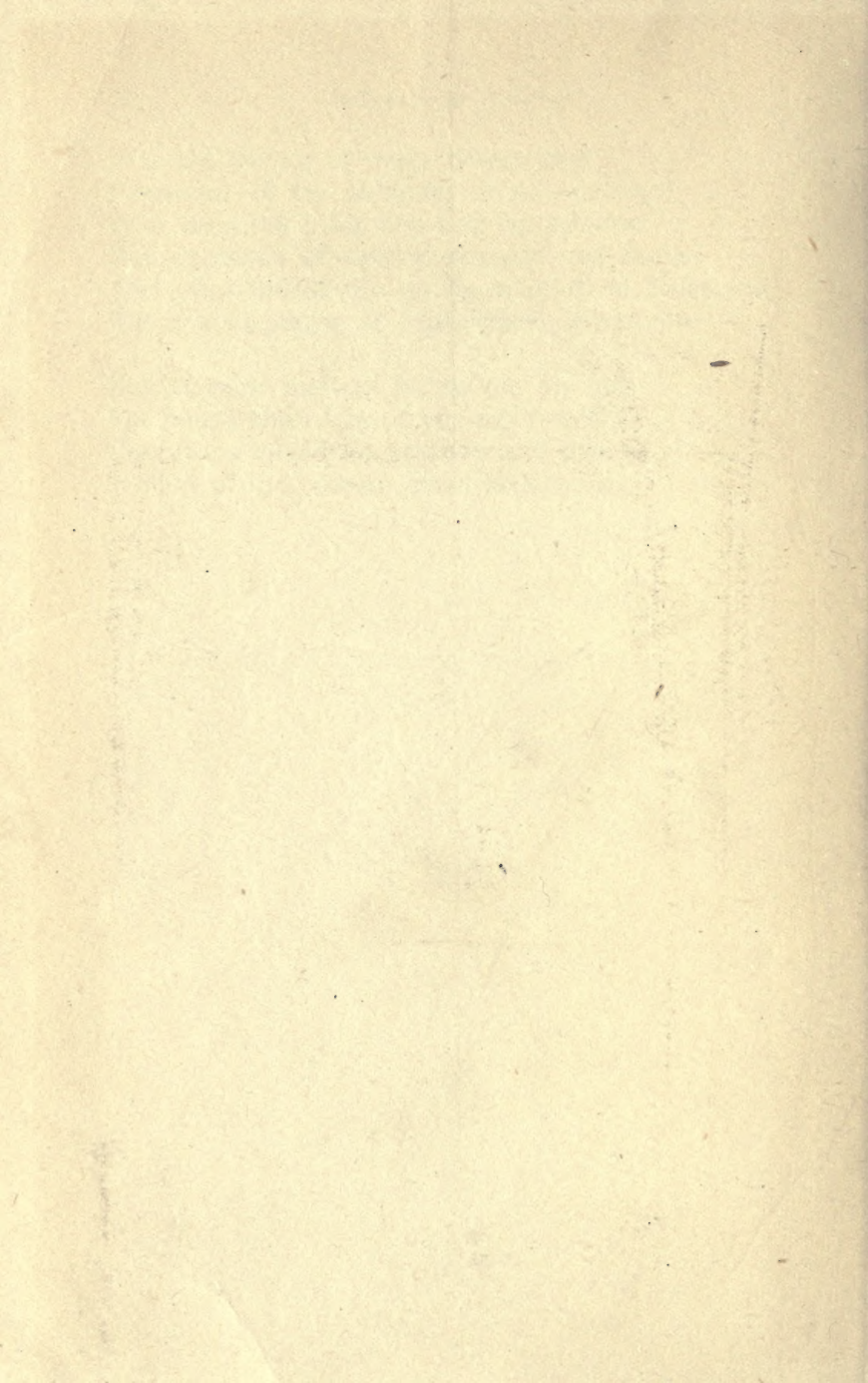
Among these princely families there dwelled
One in which kingly qualities excelled.
For nowhere under heaven were such men as
The proud and princely family of McKennas;
Proud in their lineage, dreadful in their might,
Though not a single soul could read or write.

Maecenas, from McKennas you are sprung—
Maecenas, softened by the Latin tongue!

And now, my friend, this most veracious narrative
Depends on facts, convincing though comparative.
Does not Aurelius proudly boast a name
Sprung from O'Reilly of Hibernian fame!
And came not Tully from a race that ran
Back to Hibernia's pre-historic man!
Who was Orion, girt with hunter's belt,
If not descended from an ancient Celt—
Orion, wielder of the dreadful club
Which all Hibernians a shillelah dub!
The harp that from Apollo's shoulder falls
Once woke the echoes in Hibernian halls,
And, though not first by Mercury designed,
Bespoke a people of mercurial mind.

Was not the pig at every palace door
Precursor of the obliquely-thrusting boar!
Who were the little men and leprechauns
But ancestors of satyrs, nymphs and fauns!
And what indeed the smoke-enwreathed Falernian,
But the successor of peat-reeked Hibernian!

But, to these matters let me put an end,
For happy shall I be, if you my friend
Permit me to address you now and then as
A scion of the race of proud McKennas.



PS Armour, Edward Douglas
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